

# Jewish Center of Northwest Jersey

# Journal

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www.jcnwj.org

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## Rabbi's Message

Dear Friends,

Greetings from sunny Miami, Florida, where I arrived last night to visit with family after spending the last two days driving down with Nancy and two of our four kids. Contrary to what one might expect, it was actually remarkably pleasant to spend almost 24 hours sharing the road with who-knows-how-many-thousands-of-other-drivers while confined to the interior of our 2002 Camry.

One of the many differences, of course, between driving and flying almost 1400 miles is the nature of how quickly weather changes. Hopping off a plane, the change can be dramatically drastic. In a car, however, one can grow accustomed to the change over time. For us, however, this was not the case, because when we got out of the car to spend the night with friends in South Carolina on the way down, it was already dark and cool outside. Then, after leaving the next morning and continuing our southward drive all day yesterday, we arrived in Miami, once again, well after dark. Even though it was clearly warmer, there was still a slight nip in the air. It wasn't until this morning, when we woke up to the full sun, that we felt the heat envelop us. Noa's first words to me after soaking it in were, "I now officially forget what cold feels like!" I knew exactly what she meant, and I agreed. But it also got me thinking...

As some of you know, my son, Liron, is currently in the process of applying to college. I mention this not to add to the pressure that he and so many other high school seniors are already feeling, but to share with you a rough draft (applications are not due for another few days, so he is still working on this one...) of one of the many (as

(continued on next page)

## Mark Your Calendar

- **Friday, January 5<sup>th</sup>**  
7:30 pm – Shabbat Service  
Oneg – Margolis, Weinstein, Lappin
- **Sunday, January 7<sup>th</sup>**  
9:30 am – Sunday School
- **Monday, January 8<sup>th</sup>**  
7:00 pm – Board of Trustees Meeting
- **Sunday, January 14<sup>th</sup>**  
9:30 am – Sunday School  
11:00 am – Special Event at Washington AME Church (See Pg. 5)  
TBD – Sisterhood
- **Friday, January 19<sup>th</sup>**  
6:00 pm – Potluck Dinner  
7:30 pm – Shabbat Service, Special Event with AME Church  
Oneg – Goldner/Post, Fletcher, Kalb
- **Saturday, January 20<sup>th</sup>**  
10:30 am – Torah Study
- **Sunday, January 21<sup>st</sup>**  
9:30 am – Sunday School
- **Monday, January 22<sup>nd</sup>**  
7:30 pm – Book Club
- **Sunday, January 28<sup>th</sup>**  
9:30 am – Sunday School
- **Friday, February 2<sup>nd</sup>**  
7:30 pm – Shabbat Service  
Oneg – Hall, Friedlander, Shelofsky

## Rabbi's Message (cont.)

per the instructions for this particular question, 250 words, maximum) essays that he is in the process of writing that is relevant to where Noa's comment about forgetting the cold brought me:

Growing up, I was often "accused" of sporting a savior complex. Jumping from cause to cause, I was always striving to perfect the world. Unfortunately, whenever I sensed impending failure, I would give up. Eventually I decided to surrender altogether, because no matter what I did, pain and suffering persisted. And then, last year, a seemingly inconsequential encounter changed everything.

It was an uncharacteristically cold day. I was walking home with my sister to grab a coat. On the way, we ran into a gentleman whom Shira knew as a guest at the soup kitchen where she worked. We stopped to talk. Though only five minutes, it changed me forever. I remember most how pleased he was to be recognized. He was grateful also for the coat he had been given. As we continued home, I noticed others, too, who were cold and shivering. It got me thinking. I knew people suffered in New York, which made me sad, but I knew also that this man suffered less, which made me glad.

When I shared my story with friends, the five of us immediately decided to hold a coat drive. Four weeks later, we had over 104 coats, 21 scarves, 48 blankets, and hundreds of socks to distribute through the soup kitchen. From this, I came to understand that even though I myself am unable to perfect the world, that's ok, because all I can do is what I can. From our collection, lives were saved. That matters.

JCNWJ Sisterhood has organized a coat drive this month to help those who are often overlooked and, quite literally, left out in the cold. We encourage everyone to contribute to the effort by bringing in coats (adult or child) for donation and hanging them up on the rack that we have provided for this purpose. Of course, no matter what we do, no matter how many coats we collect, there will continue to be too many who remain cold and without the help they so desperately need. But that does not relieve us of the responsibility to do what we can. After all, as we learn in *Pirkei Avot*, or Sayings of our Sages: "You are not expected to complete the task, but neither are you free to avoid it." (*Lo alecha ham'lacha ligmor, v'lo ata ben chorim l'hibatil mimena.*) And, as we learn elsewhere in the Talmud, "Whoever saves a single life, it is considered as if s/he had saved an entire world" (Babylonian Talmud Sanhedrin 37a).

Sometimes, especially in a place like Warren County where problems like homelessness may not always be seen in the open as clearly as it is in New York City, we forget that people are in need nonetheless. And no, our efforts will not solve the problem. But if we save just one person, it will be as if we had saved the entire world. So please do what you can. The world depends on your help.

Happy 2018 to you all from Sunny Miami (where we will be for another few days),

*L'Shalom,*

Rabbi Dubin

# President's Message

As I look back on this past year, I try to think of all of the positives that have occurred this year.

Here are my highlights:

- We have hired a wonderful cantor, Avital Lazar, who is continuing our wonderful cantorial presence in the synagogue.
- We have started a project to make mats for the homeless.
- We have continued our ongoing food drive for the local food banks.
- We have done another year of volunteering at America's Grow-a-Row.
- We have a new board with new commitment to the congregation, as well as retaining many of our returning board members.
- We have recycled our president for the fifth time.
- We have continued to have a wonderful year with our Rabbi.
- We have continued our Book Club.
- We had our first and hopefully annual Bark Mitzvah – a blessing of the animals.
- We have been actively planning our congregational trip to Israel.
- We have continued the Mah Jong Group.
- We have had meaningful Shabbat services as well as very spiritual High Holiday services.
- We have started studying the Book of Judges in the Rabbi's Adult Education class.
- We have been blessed to have Shira Dubin participate and begin to take over the teaching of our younger Sunday School class.
- We have continued our outreach into the Washington community by participating with the AME church.
- We participated in the area at the Thanksgiving prayer service.

May our year for 2018 look as blessed as 2017 has been.

And for those of you whose 2017 was not as good as you had hoped, I wish for you a brighter and happier 2018.

Shalom with much love,  
Howie

# SISTERHOOD

## Sisterhood Calendar

- January 14 – Meeting (time to be determined) at Temple
- March 11 – Meeting 10:30 at Temple
- May 6 – Meeting 10:30 at Temple

## Coat Donations

Please donate clean used coats in good condition to provide to the homeless. We will be collecting the coats for **Project Homeless Connect** and they will be distributed the third week of January. Coats for all ages and sizes are needed, as homelessness affects families as well as individuals. Please drop them off in the temple lobby by January 14.

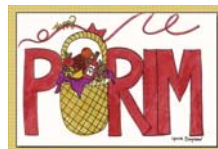
## Mishloach Manot

Purim -- a Time for Gift Giving! The JCNWJ Sisterhood is once again sponsoring the wonderful Mishloach Manot fundraiser for Purim (February 28–March 1, 2018). This is a great occasion to give sweets and gifts to your friends, family, and co-workers.

Sisterhood is coordinating this fundraiser to have a Purim treat sent to each Temple family. *Every Temple family will receive one gift bag on or around Purim.*

To support this, we are asking each family to make a donation of at least \$18.00 to cover the cost of the Purim gift bags. As in the past, however, families are encouraged to give up to \$180.00.

All proceeds from the fundraiser will go to the JCNWJ general fund. Every family will receive a letter in January explaining the details of the Mishloach Manot fundraiser. So be on the lookout for your invitation to participate.



# Updates & Events

## POTLUCK SHABBAT & MLK CELEBRATION

Please join us for our first **POTLUCK Shabbat dinner** of the new year on **Friday evening, January 19<sup>th</sup> at 6 PM.**

We will be having joint prayer services with the Washington AME Church. Rabbi Dubin will give the sermon at the Washington AME Church service on Sunday, January 14<sup>th</sup> and Reverend Terrilisa Bauknight will give the sermon at our service on Friday, January 19<sup>th</sup> following the potluck dinner.

Please sign up at perfect potluck at <http://www.perfectpotluck.com/meals.php?t=ILVH9261>.

If the weather is inclement, we will have a Saturday service with a luncheon to follow or a Havdalah service on Saturday January 20<sup>th</sup>.

## DONATIONS

In celebration of Hanukkah  
- Marsha Torine  
- Tracy and William Heisler

In honor of the High Holy Days  
- Deborah and Yitzhak Shai  
- Leonard Hirsch  
- Linda Albin and Jim Arvesen  
- Phyllis Lustgarten

In Memory of Klaire Katz  
- Alison and Andrew Shelofsky  
- Helen and John Mattson  
- Laura and Paul Tarlowe  
- Marsha and Karl Gross

In Memory of Maxwell Gross (First Yahrzeit)  
- Marsha and Karl Gross

On the Yahrzeit of Henrietta Goldstein  
- Iris and Howie Hirsch

On the Yahrzeit of Jessica Hirsch  
- Iris and Howie Hirsch

On the Yahrzeit of Laurette F. Pinn  
- Helen and John Mattson

On the Yahrzeit of Marvin Koral  
- Doreen and Rory Webb

On the Yahrzeit of Sarah Zeiden  
- Helen and John Mattson

## SHABBAT ACROSS AMERICA

Please save the date for Shabbat Across America - **March 16th, 2018.**

If you plan to come, please RSVP to Iris Hirsch at [irishirsch@comcast.net](mailto:irishirsch@comcast.net) or call [908-239-4585](tel:908-239-4585) so we can make plans based on how many people are planning to attend.

# Updates & Events

## ISRAEL TRIP

**Congregational trip to Israel!**

**June 24 – July 6, 2018**

**Relive the history of our people in the place where it all happened!**

Join us for a life changing, life enriching experience in Israel - the heartland of the Bible. Visit the places you have been hearing about, enjoy exciting and adventurous hiking and water experiences, all while visiting historic landmarks and sites of interest.

Visit the trip website at <http://www.arzaworld.com/Jewish-Center-of-Northwest-New-Jersey-Trip-to-Israel-Led-by-Rabbi-Andy-Dubin.aspx> to view:

- Promotional flyer (accenting the trip highlights) to share with extended friends and family you wish to invite.
- Detailed day-by-day trip itinerary.
- Registration process “how-to” document outlining important details as well as screen shots of what to expect and how to do each step of the process.

Looking forward to sharing this incredible opportunity with my synagogue family!

Sincerely, Lynne Kowski & Roy Loomis

P.S. if you have any additional questions, do not hesitate to email both Lynne ([Lynne.Kowski@raritanval.edu](mailto:Lynne.Kowski@raritanval.edu)) and Roy ([rloomis@cherrybrook.com](mailto:rloomis@cherrybrook.com))

## FOOD DRIVE

Our local food pantries are in dire need of supplies. Donations are down and the need for food is greater than ever. The Jewish Center is collecting non-perishable items such as canned soup, pasta, and cereal on an ongoing basis to help out those in need.

### **Wanted: Advertisers for JCNWJ Journal**

Kindly take note of the ads at the end of our Journal and whenever possible, support these establishments with your patronage. It's also a good idea to mention that you saw their Temple ad. If there are any businesses that you use regularly that might be interested in taking an ad in the Journal, please contact Rita Berkowitz ([berk721@aol.com](mailto:berk721@aol.com)) or Ruth Schutzbank ([Howie.ruth@hotmail.com](mailto:Howie.ruth@hotmail.com)). You can also go to our homepage, print out an advertising form and give it directly to them to mail in.

# Updates & Events

## RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

### Upcoming Dates:

January 7<sup>th</sup>  
January 14<sup>th</sup>  
January 21<sup>st</sup>  
January 28<sup>th</sup>

A Tu B'Shevat Seder will be held January 28<sup>th</sup>.

Sunday School students demonstrated their musical talent at the Hanukkah service, playing Piano, Clarinet, Oboe, Recorder, Cello, and Percussion. They will be working on more songs soon to add to our services. Thank you to Debbie and Jill Fesinstine for leading this effort.

## WEBSITE

Members Only!

The JCNWJ website has a section for temple members only. Here you'll find the latest membership list and other documents not for public consumption.

To access, go to [www.jcnwj.org/members/](http://www.jcnwj.org/members/) and enter the user name jcnwjmember and password. Forgot the password? E-mail [website@jcnwj.org](mailto:website@jcnwj.org).

## MAH JONGG

Mah Jongg continues at the JCNWJ. Contact Rhonda Jordan at [helpmerhonda171@yahoo.com](mailto:helpmerhonda171@yahoo.com) if interested!

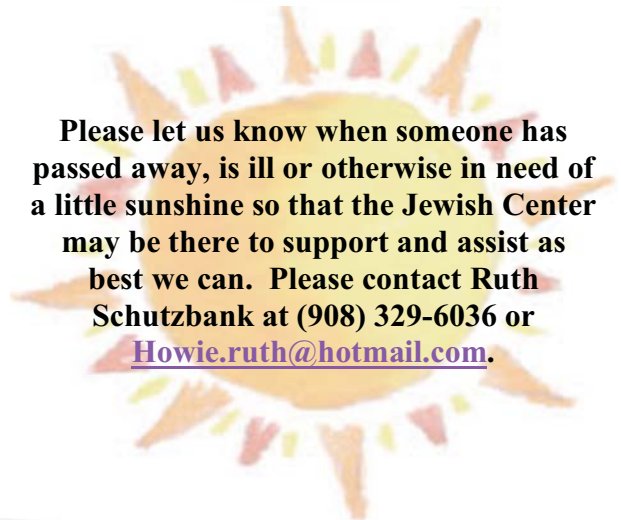
## TORAH STUDY

Torah Study continues in the Book of Deuteronomy. Please join us at any or all of the following upcoming meetings at 10:30am in the Simcha Room:

|                           |                        |
|---------------------------|------------------------|
| January 20 <sup>th</sup>  | April 14 <sup>th</sup> |
| February 24 <sup>th</sup> | May 12 <sup>th</sup>   |
| March 24 <sup>th</sup>    | June 9 <sup>th</sup>   |

## A Reminder from the Sunshine Committee

Please let us know when someone has passed away, is ill or otherwise in need of a little sunshine so that the Jewish Center may be there to support and assist as best we can. Please contact Ruth Schutzbank at (908) 329-6036 or [Howie.ruth@hotmail.com](mailto:Howie.ruth@hotmail.com).





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